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HB 296 Driver's Licenses - Older Licensees - In-Person Renewal  
Environment and Transportation Committee  
Letter of Information  
January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Good Afternoon Chairman Barve and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan the Director of Advocacy for AARP MD. AARP MD represents over 850,000 members statewide.

HB 296 prohibits the Motor Vehicle Administration from renewing the driver's license of an individual who is at least 85 years old without requiring the individual to complete the renewal transaction in person.

While AARP MD is not taking a formal position on this bill, we offering the following as information for the Committee when deliberating this bill.

People age 50 and older make nearly 90 percent of their local trips by private vehicle. The vast majority of them hold a driver's license. Older road users are overrepresented in both vehicle and pedestrian crash fatalities in large part because of their increased fragility and frailty. One reason older people are reliant on driving is that they live in communities in which driving is required. Residential housing is located far from grocery stores, medical offices, and other community features. But often no public transportation options are available.

States including Maryland have measures in place to identify at-risk or unsafe drivers of all ages. These measures include regular vision testing or self-reporting of medical conditions. Additional testing may be required before they are offered or allowed to renew a driver's license. Maryland allow health professionals, law enforcement officials, friends, and family members to refer potentially unsafe drivers to the Motor Vehicle Administration. In addition, motor vehicle department personnel in many states are trained to identify individuals who may need further testing.

Driving ability varies greatly at any given age. It is more appropriate to assess ALL drivers' ability to be safe on the road, rather than targeting older drivers specifically.

AARP MD believes that policymakers can also promote safe driving through other mechanisms. These include speed management and measures to reduce distracted driving. AARP urges **policymakers to use effective, evidence-based assessment**

Real Possibilities

**models to identify at-risk drivers of all ages.** They should receive counseling or referrals, and appropriate action should be taken. This includes issuing licenses tailored to the individual based on road test results.

Thank you for allowing us to submit this letter of information on HB 296. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at [tbresnahan@arp.org](mailto:tbresnahan@arp.org) or by calling 410-302-8451.